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For Immediate Release...

Corrections News

Aug. 5, 2008

Center for Women in Transition Opens Schirmer House for Female Ex-Offenders

The Schirmer House is self-contained, so the majority of services the women require will be provided on site.

The average stay in at the Schirmer House is 120 days. The ex-offender can then be transferred to a less restrictive facility or allowed to return home.

"This is a great example of how the State can work with local communities to create an opportunity to both improve public safety and to make a positive difference in the lives of individual women, impacting the quality of life for many in the community."

Chief State Supervisor Scott Johnston

Opened on April 1, 2007, Schirmer House is home to 30 women who are fulfilling a state-mandated supervision requirement. This facility is contracted by the Missouri Department of Corrections through capital from the Inmate Revolving Fund. This fund is generated through the collection of a \$30 monthly intervention fee from parolees and probationers in the State of Missouri and is designated for use to provide community corrections and intervention services for offenders.

Schirmer House is first of its kind in the state in that it is self-contained, so the majority of services the women require will be provided on site, including Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, anger management classes, computer training, job/life skills classes and mentoring. Four full-time employees, a probation officer and a 24-hour security team staff the facility. Schirmer residents remain at the facility for up to 120 days and then can be transferred to a less restrictive facility or allowed to return home.

Nancy Kelley, Executive Director of the Schirmer House states, "The opening of this transitional living facility for female ex-offenders marks a new approach to helping individuals re-enter successfully into our communities. The Center for Women in Transition brings 11 years of re-entry experience to this project. The program has been proven through low recidivism rates of our participants."

Debra, a resident of Schirmer House states, "Schirmer made me feel positive and safe when I didn't really have anywhere else to go. The staff cares deeply about all of the women. They truly want us to succeed, and they are always encouraging us and telling us how proud they are of our progress. They made me believe in myself."

A brief press release, immediately followed by an open house, was conducted on June 26, 2008. Speakers included Julie Boehm, Reentry Manager for the Missouri Department of Corrections; William Siedhoff, Director of the City of St. Louis' Department of Human Services; and Scott Johnston, Chief State Supervisor for the Probation and Parole Division of Missouri Department of Corrections.

Mr. Johnston states, "The Schirmer House is an innovative and exciting approach to meeting a critical need for women in St. Louis. We are pleased to be

Missouri Department of Corrections

Matt Blunt • Governor
Larry Crawford • Director

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able to support the Center for Women in Transition in this effort. This is a great example of how the State can work with local communities to create an opportunity to both improve public safety and to make a positive difference in lives of individual women, impacting the quality of life for many in the community.”

To learn more about the Schirmer House, you may visit the following website:
www.cwitstl.org

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